TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Status of Advocacy Initiatives

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information only

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Cathleen Bourdon, Communications and Member Relations AED
Marci Merola, Director, Office for Library Advocacy

CONTACT PERSON:
Marci Merola, Director, Office for Library Advocacy
312-280-2431, mmerola@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:
N/A

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SUMMARY: Recent activity of the Office for Library Advocacy is featured, including updates on privatization efforts, presidential initiatives of Roberta Stevens and Molly Raphael, programming at Annual Conference, Library Snapshot Day, Ilovelibraries.org and funding crisis efforts.

Privatization

“Keeping Public Libraries Public: A Checklist for Libraries Considering Privatization of Public Libraries,” is launching at the 2011 ALA Annual Conference. This new document from the Committee on Library Advocacy’s Task Force on Privatization was created in response to the increasing number of libraries faced with the threat of privatization in their communities. It’s available online www.ala.org/outsourcingandprivatization.

The idea came about last fall, when the Office for Library Advocacy began working with Nancy Bolt and Karen Strege on the confidential report on privatization presented at Midwinter, and used much of PLA’s August 2000 document, ‘Outsourcing: A Public Library Checklist.” Since then, OLA has partnered with PLA and ALTAFF and their member leaders to create this robust resource.
The task force includes Pat Tumulty, Committee on Library Advocacy Chair and Executive Director, New Jersey Library Association; Carolyn Anthony, Director, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library; Audra Caplan, 2010-2011 President, Public Library Association; Peggy Danhof, Board Trustee President, Fountaindale Public Library, Bolingbrook, Illinois; Kathleen Hage, Youth Services Librarian, West Palm Beach (Fla.) Public Library; Christine Lind Hage, Director, Rochester Hills (Mich.) Public Library; Donna McDonald, Director, Arkansas River Valley Regional Library; Trustee, Arkansas State Library Board, as well as Marci Merola, Barb Macikas and Sally Reed.

Privatization will be the topic of a Grassroots Program, Sunday, 4:00-5:30 at the Morial Convention Center, Room 286. Here is the program description: “Privatization of Libraries: What's at Stake for your Profession and Community” will feature a panel of library stakeholders who have been faced with the issue of privatization in their community. Learn about the process they entered to evaluate the proposed changes and determine what options would be best for the future of libraries in their neighborhood. Discover how to interact with your elected officials before they make a decision about your library. Learn from a communication specialist how to highlight the importance and relevance of public libraries to your elected officials and larger community.”

As this is a controversial issue, ALA’s legal counsel has issued guidelines for how privatization should be discussed to keep us within the law in regards to defamation and antitrust. The following guidelines were sent to the grassroots group.

- Please do not use the name of any specific outsource company.
- Please generalize library names – so “a Midwestern library found that…” rather than “Peoria Public Library found that….” The issue, here, is that using the library name effectively identifies the specific outsource company.
- And, in the antitrust area, do not call for a boycott. So, you can clearly state an opinion, backed up by your experience and/or research, that, for instance, outsourcing leads to less accountability or fewer outreach programs or…. What you can’t do – and antitrust is a particularly serious issue for associations (unlike, for instance, unions) – is call for a boycott. So, as long as you’re in “ALA space,” you couldn’t say “we need to all band together and stop these outsourcing companies…..”

In addition, ALA Editions is currently working with Nancy Bolt and Karen Strege to produce a Special Report on Privatization, which will be released this fall. Unlike most publications from ALA editions, this one will be vetted by senior management and staff to ensure that it is written under the umbrella of ALA policy on privatization.
Presidential Initiatives

Our Authors, Our Advocates: Authors Speak Out for Libraries

Three new author public service announcements (PSAs) will be available to library advocates on June 24, through the American Library Association’s (ALA) “Our Authors, Our Advocates” initiative. The new PSAs by Judy Blume, the “Pain & the Great One” series; David Baldacci, “The Sixth Man;” and Mo Willems, the “Knuffle Bunny” series focus on the value of public and school libraries. Video PSAs from Jerry Pinkney, “The lion and the Mouse,” also will be available at a later date. The PSAs will be shown at the ALA Member Pavilion and are available for viewing and downloading at www.ILoveLibraries.org/ourauthorsouradvocates.

In response to deep budget cuts in library funding, ALA President Roberta Stevens launched “Our Authors, Our Advocates” as a presidential initiative during the 2010 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. To date nearly 20 best-selling authors have participated in the initiative and have loaned their support by means of PSAs, op eds and a poster in an effort to call attention to the value of our nations libraries.

Why I Need My Library Video Contest

Two winners were announced for Roberta Stevens’ Why I Need My Library Contest. Sponsored by the American Library Association, the Why I Need My Library video contest asked teens to create original 1-3 minute videos about why they thought school and public libraries are needed now more than ever.

A total of 157 groups of teens submitted videos on YouTube from January through April 2011. Teens used live-action, animation, stop-motion and other techniques to creatively convey the contest theme.

Entries were accepted in two age categories: 13-15 and 16-18, with substantial prizes for each: $3,000 for first-place winners, $2,000 for second-place winners and $1,000 for third-place winners. However the prizes come with the stipulation that they be donated to their school or local public library. (The winners will also receive $50 gift cards to an online bookseller.)

The first-place winner in the 13-15 year category was Danielle Driggers of the Timber Creek Elementary School in Flower Mound, Texas. In the 16-18 age category, the first-place winners were Katayoun Amir-Aslami, Ashley Feldman, Isabelle Herde, Nick Howard, Nicola Scandiffio,
Stewart Taylor, Courtney Wills & Nick Zanca of the New Canaan High School, and New Canaan, Conn.

The videos will be shown at the Opening General Session, and can be found at www.ilovelibraries.org/whyineedmylibrary.

**Frontline Fundraising**

Based on Roberta Stevens’ Frontline Fundraising Toolkit, the Frontline Fundraising Town hall program will take place from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. on Monday, June 27 in the River Room at the Hilton Riverside Hotel in New Orleans.

The program will focus on raising private funds using the power of the Internet, as well as how to build lasting relationships with donors. The program will walk attendees through the stages of donor relationships, focusing on annual funds, special gifts (such as memorials and tributes), major gifts and planned giving work. The following speakers will share their expertise on fundraising and their experiences creating the toolkit: Brett Bonfield, Maria Carpenter, Susan Gregory, Danny Hales, Andrea Lapsley, Kim Olsen-Clark and Peter Pearson.

Taskforce members include: Peter D. Pearson, task force chair president, The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, Donna Bero, executive director, Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, Brett Bonfield, director, Collingswood Public Library, Maria Carpenter, director of advancement, marketing, communications, Northeastern University Libraries, Susan Gregory, development specialist, Pioneer Library System, Danny Hales, director, Suwannee River Regional Library, Penny Hummel, director, Canby Public Library, Kenneth M. Kozel, IAA secondary/senior teacher librarian, The International Academy, Amman, Andrea Lapsley, director of development, University Libraries, Colorado State University, and Rodney Lippard, director, Hackney Library-Barton College.

The toolkit is available at www.ala.org/frontlinefundraising.

**ALA President-Elect Initiatives**

OLA is the liaison for ALA President-Elect Molly Raphael’s Empowering Voices: Communities Speak Out for Libraries which will focus on engaging our communities to advocate for libraries and their value based on factors that matter to communities and their leaders. Both a planning session and committee meeting will take place at Annual Conference.
LibrariUS

The Office for Library Advocacy and the Public Library Association, are partnering with American Public Media's (APM) Public Insight Network in a program called LibrariUS. Through an interactive website, the LibrariUS initiative collects details from people using the library. Its intention is to inspire news content and, more importantly, generate a fresh and meaningful conversation about libraries and communities in the 21st century.

LibrariUS is designed to easily capture stories from patrons or library staff. A simple widget, installed on a public library's website, links patrons to the LibrariUS website and enables them to share why they're visiting the library or using the library’s website.

Their responses, along with their name (first and last initial only) and location, will be displayed on a public interactive map, updated in real time. Library staff is encouraged to contribute as well with stories of programs or services and their impact on the community. The ultimate goal for APM is to generate stories about library usage.

The website is available at http://www.publicinsightnetwork.org/librarius/.

There is a LibrariUs display at the ALA Member Pavilion. Annie Anderson of APM will be there Friday through Monday promoting the initiative.

Plans for Annual Conference

OLA will hold two programs at the 2011 Annual Conference in New Orleans:
• **Boomers, Staff & Students – Engaging the Many Voices of Advocacy: An Advocacy Institute Workshop, Friday, June 24, 2011, 1 - 4 p.m.**

Three segments of the population inherently understand the value of the library: Baby Boomers, library staff, and students. How can we engage them to be vocal supporters for libraries? This Advocacy Institute Workshop will explore ways to mobilize these groups as library advocates. Speakers include Buffy Hamilton, High School Librarian, Creekview High School, Canton, Georgia; Carla Lehn, Library Programs Consultant, California State Library; Pamela Sandlian Smith, Director, Rangeview Library District, Colorado; and Vivian Wynn, Chair, Federal Library Legislative and Advocacy Network (FLLAN). Presented by the Advocacy Training Subcommittee of the Committee on Library Advocacy, in partnership with ALTAFF. Tickets cost $50 advance, and $75 onsite. (Those who register for ALTAFF's Nuts & Bolts program from 8:30 - 1 p.m. will receive a $25 discount on combined registration.).

• **Empowering Voices: Communities Speak Out for Libraries**

  **Saturday, June 25, 2011, 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm**

  Join ALA President-elect Molly Raphael and advocacy leaders from all types of libraries in the kickoff to ALA's new advocacy initiative, Empowering Voices: Communities Speak Out for Libraries. Learn how to build on current frontline-staff advocacy efforts and focus on empowering community members to raise their voices in support of libraries. You will emerge from this session with strategies for assessing your community's needs and engaging a strong network of advocates. The event is free.

• **Library Snapshot Day: A Nationwide Success Story of Library Advocacy -New Jersey State Library**

OLA is cosponsoring this ASCLA event. Library Snapshot Day provides a way for libraries of all types across a state, region, system or community to show what happens in a single day in their libraries. This initiative provides an easy means to collect statistics, photos and stories that will enable library advocates to prove the value of their libraries to decision makers and increase public awareness. Library Snapshot Day was initiated by the New Jersey State Library; similar programs are taking place in 27 states across the country. This session will provide an overview of results from different states, and also prepare participants to easily hold their own Library Snapshot Day. Hosted by the Association of Specialized & Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA). The program takes place on Monday, June 27 from 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., at the Morial Convention Center – Room 334.
ALA’s advocacy website for the public, Ilovelibraries.org, continues to be published twice monthly, run by a primarily volunteer staff comprised of ALA staff. New resources for citizens who want to get involved will launch by Midwinter. The website is currently generating 10,000 hits daily, with 2,307 subscribers to the e-newsletter. The Ilovelibraries.org Facebook page has over 33,000 subscribers.

Library Snapshot Day

Sixteen libraries have participated in a Library Snapshot Day in 2011. April was the designated month, in hopes that we could gather enough statistics from around the country within a 30-day period so that we can announce national snapshot data. A webinar on how to implement a Library Snapshot Day are being planned for the spring. Over thirty states participated in 2010, including an EPA library and the Association of Jewish Libraries. More information is available at www.ala.org/librarysnapshotday.

Funding Crisis Efforts

The ALA Office for Library Advocacy has organized an “ALA Crisis Team,” aimed at monitoring of and quick response to crisis situations affecting libraries around the country. The team consists of members of OLA, American Libraries, the Public Information Office, the Chapter Relations Office, ALTAFF and appropriate division(s). For the most current information, visit American Libraries at www.americanlibrariesmagazine.org.